

NEWS RELEASE



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - August 3, 2007

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced today that a federal grand jury sitting in San Diego handed up a four-count indictment charging Thomas Ryan Knight with offenses arising from his use of interstate facilities in pursuing the commission of a murder for hire. Prior to the issuance of the indictment, Knight was arrested, based on a criminal complaint, on July 16, 2007, in Arizona. Knight is an enlisted member of the United States Army at Fort Huachuca.

The indictment charges that in February 2007, Knight, on an encrypted internet chat room, relayed his desire to have an individual living in Fresno, California, kidnaped and murdered. After making his intentions known in the chat room, Knight then met with an undercover San Diego Police Department detective who posed as a hit man for hire. On May 28, 2007, Knight met with the undercover officer in Coronado and told him he wanted an individual named "Derek" killed. Arrangements were made for the "hit man" to receive \$2,000 and a firearm to commit the murder. Ultimately, Knight sent a total of \$1,500 to the "hit man" and promised to provide another \$500 once the murder had taken place.

Knight is expected to be next in court on August 7, 2007, at 2:00 p.m., before Magistrate Judge Louisa S. Porter in San Diego.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 07cr2096LAB

Thomas Ryan Knight

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Counts: Four

Charge: Use of Interstate Commerce Facilities in the Commission of Murder for Hire
18 United States Code, Section 1958(a)

Penalties: Ten years' incarceration per count
\$250,000 press release per count

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
Immigration and Customs Enforcement

An indictment itself is not evidence that the defendant committed the crimes charged. The defendants are presumed innocent until the United States meets its burden in court of proving guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.